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“Die trefflich gewählten Instrumente”: Orchestrating *Don Giovanni’s* Defeat

Simon P. Keefe

Writing about *Don Giovanni* in *Mozarts Geist* (1803), Ignaz Arnold describes the effect wrought by a solo oboe immediately after the Commendatore’s death (see Ex. 1): “First, where the singing voices are silent, Mozart depicts the squirming and writhing of the dying with the wailing, falling oboe, c-b-b-flat, a-a-flat-g, f. This solo stands out brilliantly on account of the strikingly chosen instruments and the frail accompaniment; the listener himself feels an involuntary contracting in the chest. How much thought is evident at the ebbing away of this passage in the flute with the bassoon! Here we can transmit the artist’s expression straight to the music’s expression: Mozart has merged his colors strikingly into each other.”¹ Arnold also claims that each individual note of the solo – which “touchingly [...] depicts the pain of the dying Commendatore” – represents “a new stab to the heart.”² The moment occurs at the climax of what Arnold identifies as a “classic” scene.³

1 “Erst wo die Singstimmen schweigen, mahlt Mozart mit der klagend einfallenden Hoboe den Winden und Krümmen des Sterbenden, c h b, a as g, f. Dieses Solo hebt sich, auf dem trefflich gewählten Instrumente, bei der schwachen Begleitung meisterhaft heraus; der Hörer selbst fühlt ein unwillkürliches Zusammenziehen in der Brust. Wie viel Überlegung herrscht in der Abnahme dieser Stelle durch die Flöte mit dem Fagott! Man kann hier gerade den Ausdruck aus der Malerkunst auf die Musik übertragen: Mozart hat seine Farben trefflich in einander verschmolzen.” Ignaz ARNOLD: *Mozarts Geist: Seine kurze Biographie und ästhetische Darstellung seiner Werke* (Erfurt: Henningschen Buchhandlung, 1803), pp. 308–309.

2 “Wie herzangreifend mahlt er den Schmerz des sterbenden Komthürs in dem Solo [...] Jede Note is ein neuer Stich ans Herz.” *Ibid.*, p. 227. W. J. Allanbrook describes the oboe line as “the flight of the soul from the body.” Wye Jamison ALLANBROOK: *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: ‘Le nozze di Figaro’ and ‘Don Giovanni’* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 214; and Julian RUSHTON calls it a “chromatic

Example 1 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, Act I, scene 1, mm. 190–194

190

Flutes

Oboes

Bassoons

Horns in F

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Don Giovanni

Commendatore

Leporello

Cellos, Basses

[par]tir. (Muore.)

[par]tir.

dir.

It would appear that this passage is singled out for special attention as it embodies all of the qualities Arnold recognizes as central to Mozart's greatness as an orchestrator. The handling of solo and accompaniment roles is careful and sensitive, attributes discussed at length by Arnold in the context of Mozart's seamlessly evolving accompaniments and his frequent inseparability of melody and accompaniment.⁴ Individual

moan" in *W. A. Mozart: Don Giovanni* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 117. Partly echoing Arnold, H. Abert comments that "flutes and oboes intone the mournful [...] melody that brings to an end this whole complex scene, imprinting itself unforgettably on the listener and seeming to suggest a vigil by the Commendatore's dead body." See Hermann Abert: *W. A. Mozart*, trans. Stewart Spencer, ed. Cliff Eisen (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 1060.

³ Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

⁴ See the chapter "Akkompagnement," in *ibid.*, pp. 185–199, esp. pp. 185–186, 191.

instruments are astutely highlighted (the flute and the bassoon in addition to the oboe), as so often in Mozart's works according to Arnold, including terrifying trombones and "heart-melting" basset clarinets, affect-laden bassoons and melodically attractive clarinets.⁵ Mozart captures the spirit of the dramatic moment in his instrumental effect at the Commendatore's death, as he does elsewhere in *Don Giovanni*, for example in the Act II trio "Ah taci, ingiusto core" and in the Act I accompanied recitative (Donna Anna) where powerfully succinct trumpet / timpani and trumpet / horns come respectively to the fore.⁶ Individual observations along these lines coalesce into the concept of "instrumental economy" [die Oekonomie der Instrumente], whereby Mozart repeatedly "demonstrates wise ordering" [weise Anordnung] and "correct calculation" [richtige Berechnung], often leaving out instruments when other composers might have included them, thereby maximizing their effect.⁷ Quoting verbatim (and unacknowledged) from Franz Xaver Niemetschek's biography of Mozart, *Leben des K. K. Kapellmeisters Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart* (1798), Arnold explains: "Never is an instrument wasted or misused and thus superfluous. But only he [Mozart] understood the economy of conjuring up his greatest effect with the least effort, often through the single note of an instrument, through a chord, a trumpet blast, a drum roll."⁸

Arnold's appropriation of Niemetschek's commentary is only the most obvious of a number of links between his writing on Mozart's orchestration and remarks of his predecessors. Intentionally or not, Arnold extends positive arguments of the past – explicitly so in the case of Niemetschek – and counters existing disapproval. A number of Mozart's operas, including *Idomeneo*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and *Don Giovanni* are initially criticized for their "overloaded" instrumental parts; Arnold's view is that Mozart never overloads his orchestra, because instruments are only

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 218, 222–225.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 197, 198.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 211, 214. Arnold devotes an entire chapter to Mozart's "instrumental economy," in *ibid.*, pp. 208–231.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 209–210. And see Franz Xaver NIEMETSCHKE: *Leben des K. K. Kapellmeisters Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart* (Prague, 1798), p. 75 (my translation): "Nie ist ein Instrument verschwendet oder missbraucht, und daher überflüssig. Aber nur er Verstand die Oekonomie mit dem geringsten Aufwande, oft durch einzigen Zug eines Instruments, durch einen Akkord, einen Trompetenstoss, einen Paukenwirbel die grösste Wirkung hervorzuzaubern!" A looser translation can be found in Franz Xaver NIEMETSCHKE: *Life of Mozart*, trans. Helen Mautner (London: Leonard Hyman, 1956), pp. 57–58.

employed where their employment is absolutely necessary.⁹ While for Knigge's *Dramaturgische Blätter* (1788) Mozart's wind instruments in *Die Entführung* obfuscate melody and harmony, "a fault into which the best Italian composers never fall," for Arnold melody and accompaniment "are so exactly interwoven that one cannot happily be imagined without the other," the "full power" [Vollkräftigkeit] of the *Don Giovanni* and *La clemenza di Tito* scores being patently superior to the "thinness" [Magerkeit] of scores from the best of the rest in Germany and Italy.¹⁰ The *Theater Zeitung für Deutschland* (1789) claims that *Die Entführung* "is so individual and varied that on first hearing it is not entirely understandable even to a trained ear," but "as a result [...] produces new fascination with each repeated hearing."¹¹ Arnold goes further, strongly advising young composers to purchase and study Mozart's scores: "Above all, one must see, hear, feel Mozart oneself; also it is not done all at once. The immense richness is not spotted with one glance and the practiced eye misses beauties at the beginning that are only evident through repeated study. One can only comment on his accompaniment through diligent reading of his scores."¹² (Arnold's attention to orchestration detail is a practical realization of this conceptual premise.) Writing ambivalently about the first Berlin performance of *Don Giovanni* in early 1791, the *Chronik von Berlin* reports that in theatre music "not the overloading of instruments, but the heart, the feelings and the passions must be allowed to speak by the composer," clarifying that Mozart does not quite come up to scratch.¹³ For Arnold, in contrast, Mozart not only employs instruments judiciously and creatively at all times, but also as a direct conduit to the expression of passions (and

to his audience's appreciation of the expression) – the oboe line at the Commendatore's death causes the listener an "involuntary contracting of the chest" (as already noted) and the dead Commendatore's contribution to the graveyard scene sends a "cold shudder through the listener," who "imagines hearing a voice from the other world and believes in ghosts."¹⁴

On account of its protracted consideration of instrumentation issues, its close attention to musical detail, and its engagement with earlier, less formalized discussion, Arnold's *Mozarts Geist* represents a summative point in the early reception of Mozart's orchestration, and thus a useful springboard for a historically based re-appraisal of orchestration in Mozart's operas. *Don Giovanni* is a good candidate for such a re-appraisal, and not only because its orchestration received attention from early critics. For the eponymous hero actually engages with orchestration in an explicit, provocative fashion himself, as a vehicle for facilitating plot-related manipulation. Don Giovanni's assertion in "Fin ch'han dal vino" that a minuet, folia, and allemande are performed at his ball leads to the famous appearance of three orchestras in the Act I finale, ultimately confusing onstage characters and allowing him access to Zerlina; he calls his wind band on stage to perform at dinner in the Act II finale ("play, good friends: as I'm spending money I want some entertainment") and draws reactions from Leporello to the music they play (including the self-conscious aside on hearing "Non più andrai," "That tune I know only too well!"); and he sets the instrumentation for "Deh vieni alla finestra" by serenading Donna Elvira's maid with his onstage mandolin. By force of will on occasion, then, Mozart has *Don Giovanni* quite literally orchestrating proceedings.

Arnold's book makes clear that instrumental effects are successful when heard in combination with surrounding and supporting musical materials and events, rather than in isolation from them – a "single note of an instrument" can be one of Mozart's "greatest effects" only when location, time and context are apposite. An instrumental effect in *Don Giovanni* (or any other Mozart opera for that matter) is best evaluated, then, as part of a sequence of effects, as part of an orchestration process that features mutually dependent effects.¹⁵ Mozart himself points us in

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 185–186. For the early criticism see *Mozart: Documentary Biography*, p. 270 (on *Idomeneo* in 1786); p. 328 (on *Entführung* in 1788); pp. 380 and 381 (on *Don Giovanni* in 1790 and 1791).

¹⁰ "Er machte Melodie und Begleitung [...] zu einer so genauen Verwebung, dass sich eines ohne andere nicht wohl denken lässt." *Ibid.* p. 328; ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 188 and p. 190 ("Magerkeit [...] Vollkräftigkeit").

¹¹ In Cliff EISEN: *New Mozart Documents: A Supplement to O. E. Deutsch's Documentary Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 58.

¹² "Überhaupt muss man bei Mozart selbst sehen, selbst hören, selbst empfinden; auch ist es mit einem Male nicht gethan; der ungeheure Reichthum lässt sich nicht mit einem Blick erspähen, und die geübten Auge entgehen im Anfange Schönheiten, die sich nur bei wiederholtem Studium entfalten. Sein Akkompagnement kann man blos durch's fleissige Lesen seiner Partituren abmerken." ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, pp. 196–197.

¹³ *Mozart: Documentary Biography*, p. 380.

¹⁴ "Kalte Schauer überfahren den Zuhörer, er wähnt eine Stimme aus der andern Welt zu hören, und glaubt an Gespenster." ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

¹⁵ For recent discussion of orchestral effects across broad temporal and generic spectrums, see John SPITZER – Neal ZASLAW: *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650–1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 436–501.

this hermeneutic direction when describing Belmonte's aria "O wie ängstlich" from *Die Entführung* in a letter to his father (26 September 1781):

Would you like to know how I have expressed it - and even indicated his throbbing heart? By the two violins playing octaves. [...] You see the trembling - the faltering - you see how his throbbing breast begins to swell; this I have expressed by a crescendo. You hear the whispering and the sighing - which I have indicated by the first violins with mutes and a flute playing in unison.¹⁶

We need not be confined to self-contained numbers in evaluating orchestral effects either. Don Giovanni's overt manipulations of the orchestra and orchestration encourage us to consider more ostensibly subtle effects in the opera, including how effects support and/or hinder the progress of individual characters in solo and ensemble contexts, across a protracted period of time as well as in a single number.

Thus, the foundation laid by Arnold in historical, theoretical, and aesthetic terms encourages us to interpret an instrumental effect in *Don Giovanni* as an "economical" moment or passage of orchestration distinctive in itself and in the context of surrounding materials and events.¹⁷ In line with his predecessors in the nascent disciplines of instrumentation and orchestration, Arnold regards Mozart's use of winds as coloristically and expressively significant, explaining that Mozart could highlight distinctive individual sounds in more immediately audible ways for winds than for strings.¹⁸ Arnold focuses in particular on the supportive and consoling

16 *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, ed. and trans. Emily Anderson, 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1985), p. 769.

17 Arnold's study of Mozart's instrumentation in general, and his notion of instrumental economy in particular, quickly gained recognition. A reviewer of *Mozart's Geist* approved of the latter, considering it indicative of Arnold's very careful study of Mozart's scores; see *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 5 (1802-1803), col. 691. And A. Choron and F. Fayolle were particularly impressed by Arnold's observations about Mozart's "profound knowledge of the effect and the use of wind instruments." See Alexandre CHORON - François J. M. FAYOLLE: *Dictionnaire historique des musiciens*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1810-1811), vol. 2, p. 75.

18 ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 228. Many of the earliest treatises to address instrumentation and orchestration issues also focus on wind instruments. See, for example, Louis Joseph FRANCOEUR: *Diapason général de tous les instrumens à vent avec des observations sur chacun d'eux* (Paris: Des Lauriers, 1772); Valentin ROESNER: *Essai d'instruction à l'usage de ceux qui composent pour la clarinette et le cor* (Paris, 1764); Othon VANDENBROECK: *Traité général de tous les instrumens à vent à l'usage des compositeurs* (Paris: Boyer, 1793); and Othon VANDENBROECK: *Méthode nouvelle et raisonnée pour apprendre à sonner du cor* (Paris, 1789). On the distinctiveness of wind effects in historical context see SPITZER - ZASLAW, *op. cit.*, pp. 472-483.

expressive qualities of Mozart's wind instruments - Mozart's use of the bassoon to portray "sad tenderness" [traulicher Zärtlichkeit], his "declarations of love" [Liebeserklärungen] emanating from bassoon and clarinet, his heart-meltingly melancholic basset horns in the Requiem, his eloquent and touching oboe solos in *Die Entführung* and *Don Giovanni*.¹⁹ Arnold thereby foregrounds the expressive potential of Mozart's wind effects in operatic contexts, encouraging us to explain how such effects ultimately play a role in shaping the drama.

Focusing on wind writing, primarily in supportive capacities, I shall now explore two issues that relate to Don Giovanni's aforementioned posturing where orchestral effects are concerned: the extension of Don Giovanni's overt control over orchestration to refined effects and procedures; and the role of orchestral effects in battles for supremacy between Don Giovanni and the characters who pursue him (Donna Elvira, Donna Anna, Don Ottavio, Zerlina, Masetto and the Commendatore), above all in ensembles.²⁰ In so doing I shall begin to show how orchestral effects play a pivotal role in the ebb and flow of *Don Giovanni* as a whole.²¹

Don Giovanni's control of the orchestra

Don Giovanni's periods of greatest control in the plot come early in the two acts, namely Act I, scenes 5-9, which include Donna Elvira's first appearance as well as Don Giovanni's encounter with Masetto and Zerlina

19 ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, pp. 222, 225, 227. There are exceptions to Arnold's idea of winds as agents of consolation, of course, especially once trumpets and trombones are factored into the equation. These include the "terribleness" of the low oboe/clarinet unison and the "hard and frosty" bassoon and trombone in the Commendatore's contributions to the graveyard scene in *Don Giovanni* - a scene discussed below - and the "terrifyingly beautiful effect" of the trumpets and trombones in the Requiem.

20 For an article that argues that Don Giovanni's interactions with his fellow characters have been central to productions of the opera ever since its première, see James PARAKILAS: "The Afterlife of *Don Giovanni*: Turning Production History into Criticism," in *The Journal of Musicology* 8, no. 2 (1990), pp. 251-265.

21 When in the ensuing analyses I discuss such phenomena as control and supremacy for individual characters or groups of characters in *Don Giovanni*, I do not wish to imply, of course, that the characters are autonomous agents who literally set the orchestration themselves at a given moment, or develop strategies for orchestration over extended periods. I intend rather to suggest that Mozart uses orchestral effects as a means of delineating - and communicating to his audiences - control and supremacy in the context of character interactions and motivations.

at the preparations for their wedding, and Act II, scenes 1-5, which feature Don Giovanni convincing Donna Elvira that he is still in love with her, clearing the way for an attempt to seduce her maid, and his summary dismissal of the villagers who are hot on his heels. In both sets of numbers, orchestral effects synchronize Don Giovanni's mastery of the dramatic situation (through Leporello in the so-called Catalogue Aria) with his mastery of the musical situation.

Acting on Don Giovanni's behalf in the Catalogue Aria in Act I, Leporello rubs salt musically and dramatically in Elvira's wound. After listing Don Giovanni's conquests, their diverse social statuses and his master's diverse predilections, Leporello summarizes the state of affairs in his last line, "you know what he does" [voi sapete quel che fa], supported by a pristine instrumental effect – flute dotted half-notes floating above the rest of the orchestra (see Ex. 2). The effect seems both striking and inevitable: striking because nothing quite like it has been heard so far (certainly not in the sequence of numbers stretching back to Donna Elvira's entrance aria "Ah chi mi dici mai"); and inevitable because it aligns with a type of effect in "Madamina" and "Ah chi mi dici mai" that brings out the sonorous, soothing properties of slow-moving winds.²²

Leporello's first iteration of the numbers on Don Giovanni's list culminates in a sedate statement ("in Spain already one thousand and three") that includes two oboes and two bassoons (mm. 30-33); his second iteration takes sonorous wind support for the voice still further by replacing frenetic wind activity with sustained notes in the flute, oboes and horns (mm. 52-67) and by concluding with a statement about Spain that features two horns as well as the two oboes and bassoons heard first time around. (Arnold himself praises the changes of accompaniment and the blends of instrumental colors in this aria.²³) The second part of the aria (*Andante con moto*) also highlights sonorous wind sounds with increasing frequency as it progresses: two bassoons not present in the first statement of the

Example 2 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, "Madamina," mm. 151-155

Andante's main theme are added to its reprise (mm. 124-129); sustained oboes and horns and solo arpeggios in the bassoon accompany the extension of the reprise statement following an interrupted cadence (mm. 131-134); and the floating flute line appears towards the end, as if poignantly endorsing Leporello's tale.²⁴ To make matters worse for Elvira, the soothing wind sounds in the Catalogue Aria relate to her own manner of introduction into "Ah chi mi dici mai" (falling half-notes in the clarinets,

22 On the co-existence of inevitability and surprise in a Mozart instrumental repertory, see David ROSEN: "Unexpectedness and Inevitability in Mozart's Piano Concertos," in *Mozart's Piano Concertos: Text, Context, Interpretation*, ed. Neal Zaslaw (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 261-284. On the cross-fertilization of musical procedures among adjacent numbers in *Don Giovanni*, see Laurel Elizabeth ZEISS: "Permeable Boundaries in *Don Giovanni*," in *Cambridge Opera Journal* 13, no. 2 (2001), pp. 115-139.

23 ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

24 In a similar vein, Allanbrook talks of "the orchestra's ratification of Leporello's gentle devastation" towards the end of this aria, focusing in particular on the bassoon's staccato arpeggios in mm. 150-154. See ALLANBROOK, *op. cit.*, p. 246. According to Edmund J. Goehring, as a result of the first appearance of the bassoon arpeggios (mm. 131-134) "the orchestra does not merely project Leporello's thought, it creates its own independent, impersonal voice." See EDMUND J. GOEHRING: *Three Modes of Perception in Mozart: the Philosophical, Pastoral, and Comic in Così fan tutte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 39.

bassoons and horns in mm. 10–12) and to each of Don Giovanni's five interjections in her aria, which contain a halo of drifting winds that reveal the Don in musically attentive mode (even if Elvira is unaware of his presence). Elvira's humiliation, simultaneously musical and dramatic, with winds supporting Don Giovanni's machinations and Leporello's account of these machinations, is complete.²⁵

While the Catalogue Aria is Leporello's creation and thus only an indirect indication of Don Giovanni's control of the orchestra and orchestral effects at this juncture, the ensuing numbers unambiguously show the Don in his element, especially in his famous duet with Zerlina, "Là ci darem." Zerlina's final submission to his advances, "Andiam!" (mm. 48–49, see Ex. 3), immediately follows another seemingly surprising and inevitable instrumental effect. The two-eighth-note string links between Zerlina's and Don Giovanni's segments and between Don Giovanni's own are intricate and precise (mm. 46–48), connecting the last note of the concluding segment to the first note of the next one, simultaneously echoing and foreshadowing, in sympathy with Don Giovanni's persuasiveness and Zerlina's impending submission. The effect is new, as it is enacted by strings alone in give-and-take fashion, but also concludes a series of phrase-to-phrase links in sonorous wind and wind-string groupings from earlier in the duet. Winds are not present at the decisive dramatic and musical moment of Zerlina's capitulation, but their earlier participation makes the moment itself a logical (and poignant) musical event.²⁶ In addition, the effect invokes phrase-to-phrase, string-only links in Masetto's "Ho capito" at the precise moments that Zerlina is angrily addressed (mm. 33–35, 55–57) – Don Giovanni's musical manipulation (like his dramatic manipulation) again resonates beyond the individual effect and the number in which it occurs.

The Act II trio "Ah taci, ingiusto core" is another unqualified success for Don Giovanni in the simultaneous manipulation of drama and music,

25 On the rhetorical effectiveness of the Catalogue Aria, with Leporello as Don Giovanni's agent, see Elaine Sisman: "The Marriages of *Don Giovanni*: Persuasion, Impersonation and Personal Responsibility," in *Mozart Studies*, ed. Simon P. Keefe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 163–192, esp. pp. 180–182.

26 For more on the instrumental phrase-to-phrase links and echoes in "Là ci darem," see Simon P. Keefe: *Mozart's Piano Concertos: Dramatic Dialogue in the Age of Enlightenment* (Woodbridge and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2001), pp. 130–131.

Example 3 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, "Là ci darem," mm. 45–49

The musical score for Example 3 shows the orchestration for the final part of the duet "Là ci darem." The staves are arranged vertically from top to bottom: Flute, Oboes, Bassoons, Horns in A, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Zerlina, Don Giovanni, and Cellos/Basses. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 45. Zerlina's vocal line includes the lyrics: "for - te, non son... più... for - te; an - diam...". Don Giovanni's vocal line includes the lyrics: "an - diam, an - diam...". The instrumental parts for the winds and strings are clearly visible, showing the intricate phrase-to-phrase links mentioned in the text.

with the winds playing a key role. Sonorous wind sounds accompany Elvira's initial statement, including sustained notes and phrase-to-phrase links (see mm. 3–6, 8–9, 12–13). Don Giovanni takes care not just to match them in his own statement but to take them a stage further as well, in an attempt to convince Elvira of his "love" for her: the meticulous three bars of preparation for his deceitful address feature the sustained horn note from Elvira's presentation as well as a full complement of winds (2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, mm. 18–19); his phrase-to-phrase links add two flutes to the wind complement of two clarinets and two bassoons included for Elvira, in effect smoothing the sonic divide between the link and the sustained note by having the flutes' sustained b^2 grow directly out of the link rather than (as is the case in Elvira's corresponding flute e^2) existing independently of it; and the returning sustained horn note (mm. 29–30), echoing Elvira's again, follows immediately after her

interjection about the “deceiver” [l'ingrato], as if trying further to convince her that his desire for forgiveness is genuine. Don Giovanni's final (and ultimately successful) attempt to allay her doubts showcases sustained winds once again (mm. 49–52). They return as a musical backdrop to Don Giovanni's aria “Metà di voi” – frequently in the horns and in a swathe of wind sound at the beginning of the reprise – again symptomatic of his ability to convince his auditors to carry out his wishes on stage. (He needs, here, to disperse the villagers who are hot on his heels.)

Battling for control of the orchestra

Is Don Giovanni's control of the orchestra balanced or counteracted by musical events elsewhere in the opera? Is his ultimate defeat on stage reinforced by a loss of control of the orchestra (and if so, how), or does the defeat occur in spite of continued control? Is Don Giovanni, then, a musically unconquered or conquered hero?

Answering such questions necessarily involves explaining orchestral effects associated with other characters in the opera, particularly when these characters are in confrontation with the protagonist himself. The dramatic moment when the pursuers of Don Giovanni unmask in the Act I finale to oppose him collectively for the first time is a case in point. After Don Giovanni's ostentatious manipulation of the three orchestras for his own purposes and Zerlina's scream for help, Donna Elvira, Donna Anna, and Don Ottavio run to her aid, pledging (alongside Masetto) to defend her. After Don Giovanni tries unsuccessfully to pass off Leporello as Zerlina's attacker, Don Ottavio, Donna Elvira, and Donna Anna unmask in turn, each doubled by a single wind instrument (oboe, flute, bassoon), coming together to the sound of sustained flute and horns and oscillating oboes and bassoons (see mm. 509–513). When Don Giovanni is confronted by *all* the pursuers (Zerlina and Masetto now included), sonorously supportive sustained wind notes gradually envelop the voices (“Tutto tutto già si sa,” mm. 518–528, Ex. 4), eventually comprising a full wind complement of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns. When it is most needed, then – at the moment that anti-Don-Giovanni sentiment solidifies, at the end of an act in which each character is hurt by his actions²⁷ – the

²⁷ Or, more accurately in Donna Elvira's case, reports the effect of his earlier actions.

winds come out in support of the pursuers in a memorable orchestral effect. And the die is cast: the quantity and volume of wind participation in the concluding segment of the finale (“Trema, trema, o scellerato”), featuring musical and dramatic confrontation between Don Giovanni (with Leporello in tow) and his group of pursuers, heavily favors the group.²⁸

The halo of sustained winds at a defining moment in the drama is not a cheaply won orchestral effect, but one that acquires musical force as a result of ongoing wind support for the Don Giovanni pursuers over a protracted period. Earlier in the Act I finale, after being invited to enter the ball and before it gets under way, Donna Anna and Don Ottavio appeal for divine protection in their encounter with Don Giovanni, and Donna Elvira for divine help at avenging her “outraged love.” Their clarion call for assistance from a “just Heaven” [il giusto cielo] is scored exclusively for winds (mm. 253–272), lending it a sonic quality unique among ensembles thus far in the opera. The winds begin as a complete unit offering gentle, chordal support (flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, mm. 254–255); they subdivide both before and after the midpoint, building to full wind sonorities in the middle (m. 261) and at the end. The final three bars capture wind participation from this *Adagio* segment in microcosm: understated melodicism; sustained-note sounds; and full-wind chords. With voices no longer present, the winds reinforce their roles as agents of support by summarizing (and in the imitated falling sixteenth figures quietly intensifying) their preceding accompaniment, now in a solo context.

The sonic world of “Protega il giusto cielo” is itself prepared by wind participation earlier in Act I, especially in the quartet “Non ti fidar.” Just as this number is a dramatic watershed – Donna Anna and Don Ottavio's first encounter with Donna Elvira, ultimately inclining to her side rather than to Don Giovanni's – so it is watershed in terms of orchestral effects and sonorities: Don Giovanni's supremacy in matters of orchestral manipulation, evident in “Là ci darem,” and (through Leporello) in the Catalogue Aria, is successfully challenged by Anna, Ottavio, and Elvira. The musical bond between Elvira's and Ottavio / Anna's initial statements

²⁸ Arnold lauds the effect created by wind instruments in combination with voices in this section. See ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 320. On the confrontation in “Trema, trema, o scellerato,” see KEEFE, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–111.

Example 4 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, Act I, Finale, mm. 518–526

Musical score for Example 4, left page (mm. 518-526). The score includes parts for Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets in C, Bassoons, Horns in C, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, Zerlina, Don Ottavio, Masetto, and Cellos/Basses. The music is in 3/4 time and features a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) at the beginning of the passage.

Musical score for Example 4, right page (mm. 522-526). The score includes parts for Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Horns, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, D.A., D.E., Z., D.O., M., and Ve., Basses. The music is in 3/4 time and features dynamic markings of *cresc.* (crescendo) and *f* (forte). The vocal parts include lyrics: "Tut-to tut-to già si sa. Tut-to tut-to già si sa. Tut-to tut-to, tut-to".

(see Ex. 5) comprises the quartet's defining orchestral effect.²⁹ As Anna and Ottavio enter, they are accompanied in the repetition of Elvira's cadential gesture by the same combination of clarinet, bassoons, and horns that swells upwards in the second part of Elvira's statement – coinciding with a “far more decisive” projection of her musical character and “a transformation of [...] [her] musical identity”³⁰ – and that had previously introduced her in “Ah chi mi dici mai.” In short, it is a sonority that has come to be associated with Elvira. Another cadential echo follows in the flute, clarinets, and bassoons. Together, the repeated cadence (the “shibboleth for the whole quartet” or “normal heartbeat of the quartet”³¹) and the accompanying wind sonorities effect a seamless transition between Elvira's statement and Anna / Ottavio's. And it is this initial sonic bond that Anna and Ottavio recall at the end of the quartet, both the cadential figure itself and the process by which the original statements are joined.

As Elvira and Don Giovanni bicker, Anna and Ottavio participate alongside strings and winds in a seven-fold iteration of the cadential gesture (mm. 81–88) preceded by the wind swell (mm. 79–80). The orchestral contributions are scored for the same combination of instruments as at the nexus of the two initial statements in mm. 8–10 (strings, clarinets, bassoons and horns), with a flute added for the final one (as in m. 11); the conclusion of the number thus expands the moment that statements are joined at the beginning, and strengthens Anna, Ottavio, and Elvira's musical bond in the process. Anna and Ottavio cite Don Giovanni's “change of color” [cangiarsi di colore] as a sign he is not to be trusted; his musical color – specifically his ability to manipulate the orchestra – undergoes something of a change in “Non ti fidar” too. His engagement with the cadential gesture is discernibly less subtle than Elvira, Anna, and Ottavio's: there is no overlap between his statement and Anna / Ottavio's (see mm. 17–19); he forgoes close correspondence between vocal and orchestral parts in favor of a bolder arpeggio (mm. 25–26); and he

29 E. Goehring, in his reading of “Non ti fidar,” explains the bond between Elvira and Anna / Ottavio in melodic, textual, and pitch-related terms; see EDMUND GOEHRING: “Episode and Necessity in ‘Non ti fidar’ from *Don Giovanni*,” in *Mozart Studies*, ed. Simon P. Keefe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 137–162, esp. pp. 149–151.

30 RUSHTON, *op. cit.*, p. 95; GOEHRING, *ibid.*, p. 148.

31 See ABERT, *op. cit.*, p. 1071; and ALLANBROOK, *op. cit.*, p. 248. For RUSHTON (*ibid.*), “its graceful shape hovers over the rest of the piece.”

Example 5 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, “Non ti fidar,” mm. 8–13

The musical score for Example 5 shows the orchestral accompaniment for the first 13 measures of "Non ti fidar" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The score is arranged in a system with ten staves. From top to bottom, the staves are: Flute, Clarinets in B, Bassoons, Horns in Bb, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Don Ottavio. The bottom two staves are labeled "Cellos, Basses". The vocal parts have lyrics in Italian. The orchestral parts feature a prominent arpeggiated figure in the strings and woodwinds.

agitatedly adds a bar-and-a-half of his own (mm. 26–27) to the final two orchestral iterations of the gesture, preventing the gesture from smoothly running its course in the manner of earlier statements.³² Maybe such events constitute a modest attempt on Don Giovanni's part to subvert the preceding bond. In any case Don Giovanni is musically and dramatically unsuccessful at winning over Anna and Ottavio, as revealed in their textual doubts about the Don and in musical reflections on their first encounter with Elvira at the end of the quartet. Given the musical bond established between Elvira and Anna / Ottavio at the outset, Don Giovanni perhaps loses the battle before it begins; at any rate when the opportunity

32 On Don Giovanni's strategic deficiencies in his opening statement, see also GOEHRING, “Episode and Necessity in ‘Non ti fidar,’” pp. 159–161; and Stefan KUNZE: *Mozart's Opern* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1984), p. 423.

arises to make his case to Anna and Ottavio, he does not help his own cause.

In Act I of *Don Giovanni*, then, orchestral effects – those involving the winds in particular – provide a battleground for opposing characters. Don Giovanni has the upper hand in the Catalogue Aria (through Leporello) and in “Là ci darem,” manipulating effects from preceding numbers; Elvira, Anna, and Ottavio counter-attack with mutually reinforcing effects in “Non ti fidar” and the Act I finale. The process through which Elvira, Anna, and Ottavio establish supremacy is prominent towards the end of the act, but their musical bond with supportive winds begins in the immediate aftermath of an actual on-stage battle, the duel between Don Giovanni and the Commendatore, specifically with the wind effect so admired by Ignaz Arnold. For this effect (like others) resonates beyond its immediate confines, in this case into the next scene between Anna and Ottavio, where it is invoked in the chromatic, wind-only imitations of Anna’s stuttering reaction to her dead father’s body (“this blood [...] this wound [...] his face”) in “Ma quel mai” (mm. 17–23), and in the chromatically descending bassoons and oboes/bassoons passages in “Fuggi crudele” (mm. 73–80, 94–96). Individual effects, as demonstrated, acquire force by association with earlier and later effects.

Act II demonstrates a similar trajectory to Act I. While Don Giovanni is in control early on (as discussed above), he loses control again towards the end, as is evident in the graveyard scene. The Commendatore’s contribution to the recitative naturally comprises a high-impact effect (the voice, after all, comes from the dead) offering a new orchestral sound that features trombones for the first time in the opera; these instruments “[invoked] the otherworldly call to Judgment Day in the Apocalypse” and had long been employed as accompaniment for spectral voices in operatic *ombra* scenes (including in *Idomeneo*).³³ But the new effect invokes an old one too. Scored as it is for winds only (plus cellos and basses) and in a specifically otherworldly context, the Commendatore’s

orchestral accompaniment resonates with Anna, Ottavio, and Elvira’s appeal for divine assistance supported by winds alone in “Protega il giusto cielo.” Thus, the Commendatore immediately finds his rightful place in the distinctive sonic orbit of the Don Giovanni pursuers, as well as necessarily establishing the originality of his music in relation to all music that has preceded it.³⁴ His vocal contribution to “O statua gentilissima” – a single word “Sì!” in response to Don Giovanni’s invitation to dinner (see Ex. 6) – distinguishes itself not only in isolation but also in the context of Don Giovanni’s participation in the number. Don Giovanni’s contributions eschew the abundant voice-instrument echoes that characterize Leporello’s, but on every occasion before the Commendatore’s decisive second nod (except in the frenetic bars 57–59) feature sustained horn notes, as if staking a claim to specific sonic territory; Leporello incorporates these sustained notes too in due course, taking his lead on orchestral matters from his master.³⁵

Thus far all is well musically in this number for Don Giovanni – he is apparently in control where orchestral sounds are concerned. But the situation changes with the statue’s second nod, witnessed by Don Giovanni as well as by Leporello, whereupon the Commendatore in effect takes charge (see Ex. 7). Leporello’s imitation of the first nod provokes a second one from the Commendatore and an imitative echo in the flutes and horns, continuing the Commendatore’s association with slow-moving wind instruments from the preceding recitative and from the immediate response to his first nod (mm. 45–50), and foregrounding the imitative echo as a prominent effect in this number.

Don Giovanni falls momentarily into line, participating in the quick-fire echoes he had previously avoided; the subsequent flutes/horns whole notes in bar 73 match the pitches of the beginning of the echo that coincides with the Commendatore’s second nod and in a sustained-note context, bringing together the two principal orchestral techniques in this

33 Hans Rudolf VAGET: “Mörke’s Mozart and the Scent of a Woman,” in *The Don Giovanni Moment: Essays on the Legacy of an Opera*, ed. Lydia Goehr and Daniel Herwitz (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 61–73, at 64; ALLANBROOK, *op. cit.*, p. 292. On links between the graveyard scene in *Don Giovanni* and the subterranean scene in *Idomeneo*, see Edmund J. GOEHRING: “The opere buffe,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Mozart*, ed. Simon P. Keefe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 131–146, esp. pp. 139–140.

34 Daniel Herwitz remarks that “Mozart is banking on the difference between the Commendatore’s music and everyone else’s, including the arias of its opera seria characters [...] to make the Commendatore’s music appear superhuman, statuesque, and indomitable.” See Daniel HERWITZ: “Kierkegaard Writes His Opera,” in *The Don Giovanni Moment*, pp. 119–136, at 121. I would argue that musical and dramatic similarities to existing sounds are also important to Mozart.

35 See, in particular, the sustained horn notes in combination with imitative echoes as Leporello grovels to Don Giovanni (mm. 32–43).

Example 6 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, "O statua gentilissima," mm. 78-86

78

Flute

Bassoon

Horns in E

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Don Giovanni
Commentatore

Leporello

Cellos, Basses

[Don Giovanni]
[po]te - te: Ver - re - te a ce - na? Ver - re - te a

82

Fl.

Bsns.

Hns. (E)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

D.G.
C.

L.

Vc., Basses

IL COMMENDATORE D. GIOV.
ce - ne? SI. Bis[urra]

Mo - ver mi pos - so [peta]

Example 7 W. A. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*, "O statua gentilissima," mm. 63-73

63

Flutes

Bassoons

Horns in E

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Don Giovanni

Leporello

Cellos, Basses

(vedendo il ritratto)

(imita la statua.) (La statua china qui la testa.) Col - la mar -
fa co - si, co - si. Col - la mar -

68

Fl.

Bsns.

Hns. (E)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

D.G.

L.

Vc., Basses

mo - rea tes - ta ei fa co - si, co - si.
mo - rea tes - ta ei fa co - si, co - si.

duet and thus beginning to illustrate the Commendatore's capacity for forceful manipulation of orchestral effects. As defiant as ever, Don Giovanni uses all his own powers of orchestral manipulation to bring the full orchestra together, *forte*, articulating his crucial question with all instruments in support (mm. 78–83, Ex. 6): "If you can, speak: will you come to supper?" The Commendatore's one-word, one-bar response is at once supremely necessary (as a retort to Don Giovanni's act of musical and dramatic defiance) and concise.³⁶ It appropriates the horn sustained-note effect (previously Don Giovanni's orchestral property) decisively and unambiguously, through a *sforzando*, solo presentation; it reverberates into the ensuing contributions from Leporello and Don Giovanni, giving unique emphasis to the echo technique pervading this number; and it further solidifies the association of the Commendatore with a swathe of wind sound, and thus with his fellow Don Giovanni pursuers. There can be few better examples, surely, of Niemetschek and Arnold's notion of Mozart "conjuring up his greatest effect [...] through [a] single note."

As in Act I, orchestral effects in the graveyard scene accrue further musical and dramatic significance when heard in the context of orchestral participation in preceding and succeeding numbers. This scene follows and is followed by arias that feature the most elaborate, solo-based wind support for their respective characters, Elvira ("Mi tradi," from the Vienna 1788 production) and Anna ("Non mi dir"). At her lowest ebb in "Mi tradi" – betrayed yet again by Don Giovanni, and still demonstrating inner emotional turmoil – Elvira's wind support comprises not only the warm, accompaniment-related sounds and textures characteristic of her music thus far, but also free-flowing obbligato writing. Alongside the strings, the winds provide eighth-note continuations of vocal melodies, links between vocal phrases, and segments of split-theme dialogues, in addition to slower-moving, ostensibly accompanimental material, all the while resonating sympathetically with Elvira's line.³⁷ "Mi tradi" rivals "Là ci darem" in its subtle intermeshing of vocal and instrumental lines, a sure sign that the orchestra bends to Elvira as an individual, just as it does (at times) to Don Giovanni and to the collective anti-Don-Giovanni group.

36 For more on the musical conciseness of this moment, see GOHRING: "The opere buffe," p. 140.

37 Arnold praises "Mi tradi," including the continual imitations among the obbligato instruments, as one of Mozart's "most perfect" [vollendeste] arias. See ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, pp. 311–313.

Anna's two-part aria "Non mi dir" (*Larghetto – Allegretto moderato*) is the equal of "Mi tradi." After showcasing their full sound in the first four bars of the *Larghetto*, which introduce Anna, the winds then subdivide into two- and three-instrument groupings,³⁸ including phrase links, split themes, and other melodic material; they feature for the most part as a full-wind sonority in the *Allegretto moderato*, with split themes, echoes and doublings of string lines. The pivot between the two sections – the end of the *Larghetto* accompanying Anna's conclusive affirmation that Ottavio should not have her die of grief – comprises a weighty orchestral effect illustrative of Anna's control: the winds are re-assembled as a collective for the first time since the beginning of the aria (excepting a single note in bar 47), in an assertive, *forte* context; and individual components of the full-wind sonority in mm. 62–63 offer both sonorous support for Anna and a foreshadowing of her final melodic gesture (respectively the sustained notes in flute/horns and the melodic fragment in the clarinets/bassoons). Just as Don Giovanni, in his moment of defiance in "Statua gentilissima," brings the orchestra together, so too does Anna at her emotional peak. Don Giovanni is "answered," then, not just immediately by the statue, but in the next scene by another character determined to seize the sonic initiative. Indeed, as the dramatic net tightens around Don Giovanni, so the musical net tightens around him too, Elvira, the Commendatore, and Anna in quick succession revealing their ability to manipulate orchestral effects for their own purposes.

The re-affirmation in Act II of the pursuing group's status as a forceful manipulator of orchestral effects can be traced back considerably earlier than these arias, to the sextet "Sola, sola in buja loco," which to all intents and purposes counters Don Giovanni's success before it (in "Ah taci, ingiusto core," the canzonetta, and "Metà di voi"). Encountering Leporello in disguise, believing him to be Don Giovanni, and resolving to kill him, the pursuers (Zerlina, Masetto, Anna, and Ottavio at present, as Elvira is under Don Giovanni's spell) hear Elvira's appeals for clemency for "Don Giovanni." The plaintive appeal, a four-note chromatic descent with corresponding chromatic support in the oboes and bassoons, is

38 Only flute/horns among the six possible two-instrument combinations (flute/clarinets, flute/bassoons, flute/horns, clarinets/bassoons, clarinets/horns, bassoons/horns) fail to appear, although the flute/clarinet combination features a bassoon as well.

obliterated by Zerlina / Masetto / Anna / Ottavio's own four quarter-note figure, plus concluding cadence two bars later, which brings the full orchestra together, *forte*, speaking with a single authoritative voice (see mm. 86–90). Elvira tries again with the same gesture, but now unsupported by her characteristic wind sounds, as if she has been knocked off balance by the preceding response; and she is resolutely dismissed by the pursuers in the same way (mm. 94–98). Defiance, orchestral control, and dramatic orchestral effect are as one for Don Giovanni's pursuers. This confrontation echoes in several respects the confrontation between the pursuers and Don Giovanni in the final section of the Act I finale ("Trema, trema, o scellerato," mm. 568–577, 597–606);³⁹ the final section of the sextet (*Molto allegro*) resonates with the concluding section of the Act I finale in more general ways too, not least when Zerlina, Masetto, Anna, Ottavio, and Elvira (who is now aware of Don Giovanni's latest betrayal) are supported by unaccompanied solo winds (plus cellos for two bars) towards the end, modestly invoking the sound world of "Protega il giusto cielo."⁴⁰ Invoking an occasion when they had previously gained the upper hand, the pursuers begin to wrest back the initiative from Don Giovanni as purveyors of orchestral effects, a process reinforced in the ensuing numbers. The musical stage has been set, then, for Don Giovanni's defeat in his decisive confrontation with the Commendatore in the Act II finale.⁴¹

Don Giovanni's defeat in the Act II Finale

It is to be expected from Mozart that orchestral effects – in location, impact, and association with particular characters at particular times – will reflect the ebb and flow of the drama onstage, music and drama elaborating and

³⁹ The contributions of the pursuers to both confrontations consist of harmonic interruption, direct contrasts in texture and melodic line, and stepwise descents.

⁴⁰ See mm. 251–258 of the sextet. There are also audible similarities between the beginnings of the *Molto allegro* section of the sextet and "Trema, trema, o scellerato" from the Act I finale.

⁴¹ For a recent reading of the Act II sextet as a "failed rehearsal for the sacrifice in which the community would offer Don Giovanni on the altar of eternal justice, a sacrifice that takes place only at the end of the opera," see Karol BERGER: *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow: An Essay on the Origins of Musical Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), pp. 241–257, quoted material at pp. 250–251.

reinforcing each other; it is no surprise in itself that Don Giovanni has the upper hand in "Là ci darem" and "Ah taci ingiusto core" and that the pursuers do in "Non ti fidar," the Act I finale, and the graveyard scene. If nothing else, *Don Giovanni* is about control⁴² – the eponymous hero's over his fellow characters and theirs over him – and orchestral effects understandably play a part in representing changing states of affairs.

But orchestral effects have a broader impact too, encouraging listeners to hear sonic narratives and to make sonic associations across short, medium, and long periods of time; the orchestra "speaks" regularly for the characters it supports, and not just on dramatic occasions such as Donna Anna's accompanied recitative "Don Ottavio, son morta," where it expresses Anna's sentiments through short tutti interjections, before she is able to do so herself in words.⁴³ Individual sounds and effects take center stage in *Don Giovanni* – dramatic sounds and effects, to be sure, but subtle ones too, and interrelationships between subtle and grand ones, between a specific effect and a protracted series of effects. The Commendatore's entrance in the Act II finale – to the return of the overture's opening chords intensified through *ff* dynamics, an initial diminished-7th chord, and trombones as well as woodwinds, trumpets and timpani – is both creator and product of this sound- and effect-related multi-dimensionality. If it is the opera's grandest, most striking orchestral effect – perhaps the most striking in all Mozart opera – far surpassing in force any orchestral effect put into play by Don Giovanni, it is because it simultaneously needs to be and is able to be. The punches and counterpunches over two acts demand and also enable a knockout blow.⁴⁴ The orchestral effect externalizes a web of sonic associations extending right across the opera, upping the ante with an unmissable recall and a momentous sound.

The cataclysmic chords at the Commendatore's return take us beyond associations between particular characters and orchestral effects, blithely and brashly completing the process of orchestral manipulation perpetrated by the Don Giovanni pursuers while simultaneously draining Don Giovanni

⁴² On related notions of persuasion and impersonation, see SISMAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 163–192.

⁴³ On the accompanied recitative see ZEISS, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁴⁴ In the exchanges that follow the Commendatore's entrance a larger coterie of wind instruments supports the Commendatore than Don Giovanni, redolent of Don Giovanni's impending defeat. This is especially apparent immediately before and during the determination that Don Giovanni will take up the Commendatore's offer to dine with him (see mm. 487–520).

of the power to manipulate. If, following Arnold, the wind effect at the Commendatore's death invokes sympathy for him, so the chords at his return invoke, if not necessarily sympathy for Don Giovanni, then recognition of Don Giovanni's musical strength – an effect of this genuine force and power is necessary to derail the musically defiant hero. Perhaps Don Giovanni's musical cause is lost as a result of the graveyard encounter with the statue and the various sonic bonds established between Don Giovanni's pursuers and the orchestra in the numbers before and after. But he refuses to accept musical defeat here – just as he did in the Act I finale – launching a defiant rearguard action at the beginning of the Act II finale with one last, no-holds-barred attempt to take control of the orchestra, symbolically through the winds, which had provided the primary sonic battleground for him and his pursuers. The wind band on stage for the presentation of the popular contemporary operatic segments (2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, plus cello) has to obey Don Giovanni's command ("strike up good friends; since I'm spending money let's have some entertainment"); they are *his* band, doing exactly what *he* wants.⁴⁵ Ever attentive to changed circumstances (in this case the renewed strength of his pursuers at manipulating orchestral effects), Don Giovanni homes in forcefully on wind sounds and on what he hopes will be – but which self-evidently is not – a final, conclusive manipulation of them. While his grip on the orchestra has slipped and his attempt to reassert it is ultimately unsuccessful, he has done more than enough to confirm his principal character attribute, namely musical strength. He is less "No-Man," in Wye Jamison Allanbrook's well-known formulation to describe his lack of allegiance to a class and his imitation of all classes,⁴⁶ and more "strong man."

There is little that is noble about Don Giovanni's onstage actions in the opera, aside perhaps from his "splendidly attractive and grand refusal to be intimidated" in refusing to repent for the Commendatore,⁴⁷ but everything that is noble about his musical ability repeatedly to fight on in the face of adversity, even after the fatal musical blow that is the

45 The winds also participate prominently in the initial segment of the Finale, especially in the tutti, march-like figures.

46 ALLANBROOK, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

47 See Bernard WILLIAMS: "Don Giovanni as an Idea," in RUSHTON, *op. cit.*, p. 88. Rushton himself states: "One may deplore Giovanni's attitude; but one cannot help but admire his almost superhuman courage." *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Commendatore's chords. He is on the run onstage from the Act I finale onwards, but hardly behaves musically in a way that reflects this. If we do feel for him as the Commendatore returns, it is for the musically disempowered, once-brilliant orchestral manipulator who is ultimately undone only by the biggest orchestral manipulation of them all. If we experience terror, or horror, or awe on hearing the Commendatore's chords – just as Arnold experiences involuntary contracting of the chest at the Commendatore's death and is persuaded to believe in ghosts after the graveyard scene, and just as later in the nineteenth century E. T. A. Hoffmann and Kierkegaard stress "perhaps the central conceit of *Don Giovanni* [...], our responsiveness to music [...] [as] a figure for our responsiveness to our own passions and to those who inspire them"⁴⁸ – it is because we know that Don Giovanni must do so too, beaten as he is by an orchestral effect that he himself would once have been capable of creating and whose gravity he must consequently understand. Don Giovanni is beaten, ultimately, by sound.

Orchestral effects in *Don Giovanni*, then, acquire a life and affective power of their own. If we appreciate the obvious links between effects – the overture and Commendatore chords are the *locus classicus* – we put ourselves in a position to appreciate the web of associative links that lie behind them, energizing, shaping, and explaining events, characters, motivations, and interactions. Arnold finds much in *Don Giovanni* that is troubling, including its unethical, incoherent, and farcical qualities.⁴⁹ But, by drawing our attention to orchestral sounds and effects, redolent of the "collection of individual beauties" [Sammlung einzelner Schönheiten] contained in the opera,⁵⁰ he rightly recognizes that individual orchestral moments have the power to unlock hermeneutic doors that allow access to the meaning of this extraordinary work.

48 Richard ELDRIDGE: "Hidden Secrets of the Self: E. T. A. Hoffmann's Reading of *Don Giovanni*," in *The Don Giovanni Moment*, pp. 33–46, at 44.

49 See Edmund GOEHRING: "Ignaz Arnold: a Troubling Genius," unpublished paper read at the annual meeting of the Mozart Society of America, November 2008.

50 ARNOLD, *op. cit.*, p. 328.